



File Code: 1950-1

Date: July 2, 2015

Dear Six Rivers National Forest Partner,

I am excited tribal consultation and inclusive community outreach revealed wide spread support to implement a suite of aquatic restoration activities across the Six Rivers National Forest. I want to say thank you to long-standing neighbors and partners, and to let you know I heard you and plan to take action.

I have asked my staff to initiate the 30-day Scoping period for the Six Rivers National Forest-wide Aquatic Restoration Environmental Assessment, as required by the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Scoping is the first step in the environmental analyses process that will be disclosed in a subsequent environmental assessment planned for this fall; the basis of my pending federal decision to authorize restoration (see the NEPA Process flow chart below).

I encourage you to submit your **written** Scoping comments on the proposed action by **August 3, 2015**. Three informational attachments describing aquatic restoration activities under consideration are provided for your review including: 1/ a description of the suite of treatment practices; 2/ maps displaying where likely and potential restoration activities may occur; and, 3/ a table describing representative batched restoration activities linked to map identifiers.

Your feedback does make a difference. I deliberated on public issues and recommendations provided so far. In response, I have incorporated the following activities to be analyzed and considered as part of my decision:

- Restoration actions on private lands based on voluntary owner interest, as allowed under the Wyden Amendment¹.
- Non-mechanized restoration activities in wilderness areas associated with identified fish bearing streams.
- Restoration activities for non-anadromous fish and other aquatic species found in natural ponds, lakes and in support of warm water fisheries, such as Ruth Reservoir.
- Restoration and cleanup of illegal marijuana grow operations that may be impacting the quantity and quality of water, as well as aquatic species and their associated habitat.

¹ The Wyden Amendment (Public Law 109-54, Section 434) authorizes the Forest Service to enter into cooperative agreements to benefit resources within watersheds on National Forest System lands. Agreements may be with willing Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments, private and nonprofit entities, and landowners to conduct activities on public or private lands for the following purposes: 1/ protection, restoration, and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat and other resources, 2/ reduction of risk for natural disaster where public safety is threatened, or 3/ a combination of both.



As the Forest Supervisor of the Six Rivers National Forest (NF), I am passionate about my duty as steward of our valued wetlands, lakes and stream networks feeding the Smith, Klamath, Trinity, Mad, Van Duzen and Eel Rivers, featuring over 400 miles of anadromous fisheries habitat. I am concerned all watersheds across the Six Rivers NF are listed as water quality impaired under the Clean Water Act, except one (the Smith River watershed). During the 30-day Scoping period, my interest is to provide continued opportunities for public comment and collaboration with those dedicated to land stewardship.

Please send your scoping comments to Carolyn Cook, Watershed, Fisheries and Wildlife Program Manager at 707-441-3551. Scoping comments may be (1) mailed to or hand delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., weekdays at 1330 Bayshore Way, Eureka, CA 95501-3834; (2) faxed to (707 442 9242; or (3) electronically mailed to cacook@fs.fed.us. Please indicate the name ***“Six Rivers National Forest-wide Aquatic Restoration Project”*** in the subject line of your email(s). I appreciate your interest in public land management and welcome your comments and participation.

Sincerely,

MERV GEORGE JR.
Forest Supervisor
Six Rivers National Forest

Date

Where is this project in the Forest Service NEPA process?

NEPA (short for the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969) guides the Forest Service decision-making process and provides opportunities for interested parties to give their ideas about resource management. Input during the scoping period (step 3 in diagram to right) is important in helping the Forest Service identify resource needs which will shape the alternatives that are evaluated and lead to the formation of a decision.

The Six Rivers National Forest-wide Aquatic Restoration Project falls under the provisions of the Six Rivers National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (SRNF LRMP) (USDA 1995).

The EA is subject to public notice, comment and administrative review for this project is governed by 36 CFR 218 Subparts A and B regulations; including a pre-decisional objection process for projects documented in a Decision Notice. The diagram to the right shows the steps of the NEPA process for this proposed project. The box highlighted in grey indicates where the attached proposed action is in that process. Boxes with a thicker, bold outline are public involvement opportunities offered during the planning process.

